

Doctrine of Baptism (04ST6105)

Reformed Theological Seminary Atlanta
Summer 2019

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Class Schedule

Monday, June 10, 9:00am – 4:30pm
Tuesday, June 11, 9:00am – 4:30pm
Wednesday, June 12, 9:00am—4:30pm
Thursday, June 13, 9:00am—4:30pm

Class Description

This course will offer an in-depth study of the doctrine of baptism. It will examine the major views of baptism and their strengths and weaknesses, both from a biblical-theological perspective and from an historical perspective. The historical survey will focus especially on the theologians, the writings, and the archeological evidence of the early church but will also devote time to the Middle Ages and the Reformation and post-Reformation periods. The course will strive to do everything in a fair and gracious spirit that fosters increased unity in the church and increased devotion to Christ.

Required Reading

John Armstrong, ed., *Understanding Four Views on Baptism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007).

Guy M. Richard, *Baptism: Answers to Common Questions* (Sanford, FL: Reformation Trust, 2019).

Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright, eds., *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ* (Nashville: B&H, 2006).

**It is expected that students will bring their Bibles with them to class.*

Student Evaluation

1. **Required Reading: 40% of final grade. Date Due: July 19, 2019.**
Students will report on the percentage of reading they have completed over the course of the semester. If the student does not report the percentage of the reading they have completed, it will be assumed that they have not completed any of it.
2. **Reflection Papers: 60% of final grade. Date Due: July 19, 2019.**
Students will be expected to complete three (3) reflection papers. Each paper should be no less than 4 pages and no more than 5 pages double-spaced (12-pt font Times New Roman or equivalent). Students can choose any three chapters in the *Four Views* book for these papers. It is expected that each paper will provide exegetical analysis

and engagement on the specific view of baptism provided in each chapter. It is also expected that each paper will provide critical engagement with the view that is being examined. Please note: I am not interested in mere regurgitation of the main points provided in the chapter. I am interested in seeing you interact with the view of baptism in question, citing strengths and weaknesses along with corresponding reasons for why the particular view is right or wrong from biblical-theological and historical perspectives.

All work is due by Friday, July 19 at midnight. Everything must be submitted by email to the professor at the above email address by the deadline. Late submissions will be accepted but will merit a deduction of 3 percentage points per day off of what would otherwise be the student's grade (i.e., if student earned a 95 on given assignment [out of total of 100 points] and was 2 days late, the student's final grade would be an 89 [i.e., 95 – 6 points = 89]). The 3 percentage-point penalty will begin at 12:01am on July 20 (according to the date on the email). This penalty will be waived only if a student is providentially hindered from completing the assignments on time (i.e., death, hospitalization, etc.) and/or has made prior arrangements with the professor.

Proposed Lecture Schedule

Monday AM—Course introduction. Introduction to baptism.

Monday PM—What is baptism?

Tuesday AM—What is baptism?

Tuesday PM—The meaning and mode of baptism.

Wednesday AM—The recipients of baptism

Wednesday PM—The recipients of baptism

Thursday AM—What does history teach us?

Thursday PM—What does history teach us? Wrap-up.

Select Texts for Additional Reading on your own

Kurt Aland, *Did the Early Church Baptize Infants?* (London: SCM Press, 1962).

JG Davies, *The Architectural Setting of Baptism* (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1962).

Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

JV Fesko, *Word, Water, and Spirit: A Reformed Perspective on Baptism* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2010).

Joachim Jeremias, *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries*, trans. David Cairns (London: SCM Press, 1960).

Joachim Jeremias, *The Origins of Infant Baptism: A Further Study in Reply to Kurt Aland*, trans. Dorothea M. Barton (London: SCM Press, 1963).

Paul K. Jewett, *Infant Baptism and the Covenant of Grace* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978).

David Kingdon, *Children of Abraham: A Reformed Baptist View of Baptism, the Covenant, and Children* (Sussex: Carey Publications, 1973).

John Murray, *Christian Baptism* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1992).

William Wall, *The History of Infant Baptism*, 2 vols. (1705; London: Griffith, Farran, Okeden, & Welsh, n.d.).

Rowland S. Ward, *Baptism in Scripture and History: A Fresh Study of the Meaning and Mode of Christian Baptism* (Brunswick: Globe Press, 1991).